

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1-8 (canceled)

9. (currently amended) A spark plug for an internal combustion engine, the spark plug having at least two electrodes, in which the electrodes are formed of a first base part made of a substrate material and a surface part made of a material more durable than the substrate material, wherein the surface part is fastened to the first base part via an intermediate part, and ~~that~~ the joint between the surface part and the intermediate part is an explosion welding joint.

10. (previously presented) A spark plug according to claim 9, wherein the surface part is formed of at least one metal of the Pt group (Pt, Pd, Ir, Rh, Ru, Os) or an alloy thereof.

11. (previously presented) A spark plug according to claim 9, wherein the joint between the surface part and the intermediate part is essentially homogenous on the whole surface area of the of the joint.

12. (currently amended) A spark plug according to claim 11, wherein the joint between the substrate material part of the first base part and the intermediate part is a conventional melt welding joint.

13. (currently amended) A spark plug according claim 9, wherein the material strength thickness of the surface part perpendicular to the joint surface of it and the intermediate part is 0.05 - 2 mm.

14. (currently amended) A method for producing a spark plug having at least two electrodes, in which the electrodes ~~are produced from~~ each include at least a first base part, made of ~~the substrate~~ a substrate material of the spark plug, and a

surface part, made of a material more durable than the substrate material, ~~characterized by comprising the following combination of production stages, in which steps:~~

~~forming a blank is formed, comprising a surface part and an intermediate part, by joining the surface part to the intermediate part by means of explosion welding,~~

~~separating a part with a suitable form is separated from the blank to form the electrode of the spark plug, and~~

~~fastening the part separated from the blank is fastened to the first base part of the spark plug so that the joint a joint is made between the said first base part and the intermediate part.~~

15. (currently amended) A method according to claim 14, wherein ~~the intermediate part of the blank is planar and the surface part of the blank is formed of a planar piece consisting and consists of at least one metal of the Pt group or an alloy thereof, the piece being explosion welded to the intermediate piece, also planar thereof.~~

16. (currently amended) A method according to claim 15, wherein the surface part of the blank is formed of powder consisting of at least one metal of the Pt group or an alloy thereof, the powder being simultaneously solidified and joined to the intermediate ~~piece part~~ by means of explosion welding.

17. (new) A method for producing a spark plug having a center electrode and a ground electrode in which the electrodes each include at least a base part, made of a substrate material of the spark plug, and a surface part, made of a material more durable than the substrate material, comprising the following steps:

forming a composite blank comprising a surface part and an intermediate part, by joining the surface part to the intermediate part by means of explosion welding,

separating a first composite member with a suitable form from the blank to form the ground electrode of the spark plug,

fastening the first composite member to the base part of the ground electrode so that a joint is made between the said base part of the ground electrode and the intermediate part of the first composite member,

providing a second composite member that comprises a second surface part made of a material more durable than the substrate material of the base part of the center electrode and also comprises an intermediate part to which the second surface part is joined by explosion welding, and

fastening the second composite member to the base part of the center electrode so that the surface part of the first composite member is in spaced confronting relationship with the surface part of the second composite member.